



2005 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 72

March 1, 2006 - Introduced by Senators LASSA, SCHULTZ, ROBSON, OLSEN, PLALE, WIRCH, BRESKE, DARLING and MILLER, cosponsored by Representatives KESTELL, KERKMAN, SHERIDAN, SEIDEL, LEHMAN, OTT, GUNDERSON, GRIGSBY, KRAWCZYK, M. WILLIAMS, SINICKI, BERCEAU and TURNER. Referred to Committee on Senate Organization.

1 **Relating to:** proclaiming the week of April 16-22, 2006, "Shaken Baby Syndrome
2 Awareness Week.

3 Whereas, the 70,000 children born in Wisconsin every year are our most
4 vulnerable citizens; and

5 Whereas, the American Academy of Pediatrics recognizes that newborns,
6 infants, and toddlers are especially vulnerable to shaken baby syndrome, the pattern
7 of injury that results from an act of violent shaking or throwing by a parent or
8 caregiver, but that children as old as 5 years of age can be injured by such acts of
9 violence; and

10 Whereas, shaken baby syndrome and other inflicted head trauma is now
11 recognized as a leading cause of child fatalities; and

12 Whereas, researchers at the University of California-Irvine report that
13 children between the ages of birth and 5 months are at the greatest risk of injury and
14 death due to abuse or neglect; and

1 Whereas, statistics suggest that as many as 66 children are shaken each year
2 in Wisconsin, 17 of these children die, and the remainder suffer from severe and
3 permanent disabilities, including loss of vision, brain damage, paralysis, and
4 seizures; and

5 Whereas, medical professionals believe that many more cases of shaken baby
6 syndrome are being misdiagnosed or not detected; and

7 Whereas, these inflicted injuries are usually precipitated when a parent or
8 caregiver is not prepared to cope with the frustration and anger that can result from
9 the inconsolable crying of an infant or unrealistic expectations of a child's behavior;
10 and

11 Whereas, it is estimated that 10 to 20 percent of infants experience episodes of
12 colic, characterized by inconsolable crying for more than 3 hours a day for more than
13 3 weeks, meaning that every year between 7,000 and 14,000 Wisconsin babies may
14 have such sustained periods of crying, with commensurate stress for their
15 caregivers; and

16 Whereas, a survey conducted by Prevent Child Abuse America found that
17 one-half of Americans with children believe parents do find themselves in situations
18 where they are afraid they might abuse or neglect their child; and

19 Whereas, shaken baby syndrome and other inflicted injuries are totally
20 preventable; and

21 Whereas, the medical costs of treating shaken baby syndrome cases and the
22 costs of rehabilitation services to surviving infants may exceed more than \$1,000,000
23 for the care of a single disabled child during the first few years of life; and

24 Whereas, the costs of those services are primarily paid by the state of Wisconsin
25 Medicaid program, which in 2003 paid for 38 percent of births in the state, and by

1 private health insurers, resulting in higher taxes and health insurance costs for all
2 citizens of the state; and

3 Whereas, shaken baby syndrome cases further impact costs to communities in
4 many ways, including the investigation and prosecution of shaken baby syndrome
5 cases, the tragic disruption of families, and the special education needs that are
6 frequently required by those who have survived even modest head traumas; and

7 Whereas, shaken baby syndrome prevention programs have demonstrated that
8 educating new parents about the danger of shaking or throwing young children and
9 how they can help protect their child from injury can effect a significant reduction
10 in the number of shaken baby syndrome cases; and

11 Whereas, training and education for child care providers, as well as our high
12 school and middle school students, who are frequently employed as paid or unpaid
13 babysitters, is also effective in helping keep young children safe from injury; and

14 Whereas, the minimal costs and effort involved in such educational and
15 preventive programs avert enormous medical and disability costs and untold grief
16 for many families; and

17 Whereas, efforts to prevent shaken baby syndrome are supported by numerous
18 groups such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Exchange Club,
19 the Kiwanis, the Children's Trust Fund, Parents' Action, Healthy Start Coalition, as
20 well as advocacy groups formed by parents and relatives of children who have been
21 killed or injured by shaking, such as the National Shaken Baby Coalition, the
22 Shaken Baby Association, the SKIPPER Initiative, and the Shaken Baby Alliance;
23 and

